announced in a Joint Press Conference with Prime Minister that South Africa would have no difficulty or objection in supplying uranium to India.

(d) No.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

G-8 summit in Japan

698. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had attended the G-8 Summit in Japan recently; and

(b) if so, the issues discussed therein and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Prime Minister attended the G-8 outreach sessions in Japan on 9 July 2008.

(b) The issues discussed at the outreach sessions included the Heiligendamm Process, world economy, climate change and environment, development, with focus on Africa and regional issues.

Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan jails

699. SHRI P. R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian fishermen who are in Sri Lankan jails;

(b) whether Government of India has taken up their cause at diplomatic levels; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) As of October 2008, there is no *bona fide* fisherman of India in Sri Lankan custody. However, there are eight Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan custody for their alleged involvement in smuggling narcotics and explosives, and for transporting Sri Lankan refugees.

(b) and (c) Government have always taken up on a priority basis the question of the safety of our fishermen with Sri Lanka. High Commission of India in Colombo, Sri Lanka has taken up the issue with concerned Sri Lankan authorities for speedy disposal of the cases of the eight fishermen currently in custody.

Visit of US officials

700. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of officials, diplomats and political leaders from the United States who have visited the country in the last two years to hold talks on the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement with Government of India, political parties and other officials; and

(b) the details of the talks available with Government?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) There have been several visits by officials, diplomats and political leaders from the United States of America to India in the last two years. Notable among them were the visits of the US Treasury Secretary, Henry Paulson in October 2007, Governors of the US States of Minnesota and Utah in September-

October 2007, US Health Secretary Michael O.Leavitt in January 2008, US Defence Secretary Robert Gates in February 2008, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi in March 2008, Congressional Delegation led by Gary Ackerman in July 2008 and US Secretary of State Dr. Condoleezza Rice in October 2008. The delegations interacted with relevant Indian institutions and met with their Indian counterparts including officials of the Government of India and high dignitaries such as Members of the Indian Parliament, Members of the Union cabinet and other political leaders. These delegations pursued a wide ranging agenda covering the entire spectrum of the India-US bilateral cooperation and strategic relationship including the India-US civilian nuclear initiative and cooperation in the areas of defence, counter terrorism, space, energy, science and technology, health, education, agriculture, high technology, trade and commerce and on regional and global issues of common concern.

Refusal to provide uranium

†701.SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite India getting waiver from nuclear trade in NSG a few countries have refused to provide uranium to India;

(b) if so, the details of such countries and reasons for their refusal of uranium to India;

(c) whether Government is holding any talks with Governments of these countries; and

(d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) The Australian Government has publicly stated that it has a long standing policy to not supply uranium to countries which have not signed the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT). India is not a signatory to the NPT.

Statement of Pakistan's President

†702.SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the President of Pakistan has said that Pakistan has no danger from India;

(b) whether India can also say that it has no danger from Pakistan;

(c) the number of persons involved in bomb blasts over the years who are living in Pakistan; and

(d) whether Pakistan has been asked not to give them shelter and repatriate them?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes.

(b) India is committed to peace, friendship and good neighbourly relations with Pakistan. India has nevertheless continuing and serious concerns. In this regard, Government have reiterated the importance of fulfilment of commitments contained in the Joint Statements of 6th January 2004 and 24th September 2008 that Pakistan would not permit any territory under its control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.